



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/647,334	08/26/2003	Yasuo Tamura	1614.1359	3539
21171	7590	02/04/2009	EXAMINER	
STAAS & HALSEY LLP			MUSSELMAN, TIMOTHY A	
SUITE 700			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
1201 NEW YORK AVENUE, N.W.				3715
WASHINGTON, DC 20005			MAIL DATE	DELIVERY MODE
			02/04/2009	PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	10/647,334	TAMURA ET AL.
	Examiner	Art Unit
	TIMOTHY MUSSELMAN	3715

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If no period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 29 October 2008.
- 2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.
- 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 3 is/are pending in the application.
 - 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) Claim(s) 3 is/are rejected.
- 7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
- 4) Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date: _____
- 5) Notice of Informal Patent Application
- 6) Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Status of Claims

In response to the communication filed 10/29/2008, claim 3 is pending in this application. Claims 1-2, 4-6, and 9-12 are cancelled herein, and claims 7 and 8 have been cancelled previously.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of the relevant portion of 35 U.S.C. 103 that forms the basis for the rejections made in this section of the office action;

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains.

Claim 3 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Toshiya et al.

(Japanese pub# 2001-273375) in combination with 'North Carolina Bar Exam Results – July 2001 EXAM'.

Regarding claim 3, Toshiya discloses a system for distributing exam results which sends a user an email asking if the user wants to view exam results, and upon a user reply, sends another email to the user containing a link (network address) containing the results. See paragraphs 0001 and 0018-0020. Toshiya also discloses in paragraph 0021 that examinees are identified by examinee numbers. Although Toshiya discloses wherein the results can include the results of other examinees willing to share, (see paragraph 0026), there is no teaching wherein it is ID numbers in close proximity with corresponding results that is transmitted to the examinee (in order to provide a sample of test results to lessen the psychological impact of the examinee score). However, posting and releasing exam information including information about other

Art Unit: 3715

examinees has been common for many years (e.g. results of exams were typically posted on boards wherein the scores were ranked and identified by Social Security number, student ID number, etc.). Consider the enclosed reference, which is a copy of a website displaying pass/fail information about bar exam results for the state of North Carolina in 2001. Note that information about multiple examinees is presented. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to include such information about multiple examinees in other systems as well, including Toshiya, in order to allow the examinee to see how they performed in a comparative sense with fellow examinees, as is already well established in the art.

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments dated 10/29/2008 have been fully considered, but are moot in view of the new grounds of rejection.

Conclusion

THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL. Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to TIMOTHY MUSSELMAN whose telephone number is (571)272-1814. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon-Thu 6:00AM - 4:30PM.

Art Unit: 3715

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Xuan Thai can be reached on (571)272-7147. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/T. M./
Examiner of Art Unit 3715

/XUAN M. THAI/
Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit 3715